

In the specification:

Page 1, line 3, change the heading “Prior Art” to --

Background of the Invention --.

Amend the first paragraph on page 1 as follows:

The invention concerns a piezoelectric actuator, e.g., to actuate a mechanical component such as a valve or the like[, according to the features-based on the general class-of the primary claim].

✓**On page 1, line 21, change the heading “Advantages of the Invention” to -- Summary of the Invention --.**

After this heading please insert the following paragraph:

-- In keeping with these objects and with others which will become apparent hereinafter, one feature of present invention resides, briefly stated in a piezoelectric actuator, comprising a multilayer structure of piezoelectric plies; internal electrodes and external electrodes, said internal

electrodes being arranged between said piezoelectric plies and having a lateral contacting in alternate direction of said internal electrodes with said external electrodes having two different polarities, two consecutive internal electrodes having a same polarity always comprise one internal electrode always having the other polarity between them and having a common contact point with their assigned external electrode, one of the two internal electrodes having the same polarity passing all the way through the piezoelectric actuator from a side of its contacting with said external electrode to an opposite side, the other internal electrode having the same polarity always terminating with clearance on a side of the piezoelectric actuator opposite to its contacting, the internal electrode passing all the way through the piezoelectric actuator terminating in a region of the piezoelectric actuator that is bridged over to prevent a short circuit of said external throat arranged there. --

✓On page 3, in line 24, change the heading “Diagram” to --

Brief Description of the Drawings --.

✓On page 4, line 8, change “Description of the Exemplary Embodiments” to -- Description of the Preferred Embodiments --.

Amended paragraph 1, on page 1:

a2
The invention concerns a piezoelectric actuator, e.g., to actuate a mechanical component such as a valve or the like.

a3
On page 1, after the heading "Summary of the Invention",
please insert the new paragraph:

-- In keeping with these objects and with others which will become apparent hereinafter, one feature of present invention resides, briefly stated in a piezoelectric actuator, comprising a multilayer structure of piezoelectric plies; internal electrodes and external electrodes, said internal electrodes being arranged between said piezoelectric plies and having a lateral contacting in alternate direction of said internal electrodes with said external electrodes having two different polarities, two consecutive internal electrodes having a same polarity always comprise one internal electrode always having the other polarity between them and having a common contact point with their assigned external electrode, one of the two internal electrodes having the same polarity passing all the way through the piezoelectric actuator from a side of its contacting with said external

*a³
and*

electrode to an opposite side, the other internal electrode having the same polarity always terminating with clearance on a side of the piezoelectric actuator opposite to its contacting, the internal electrode passing all the way through the piezoelectric actuator terminating in a region of the piezoelectric actuator that is bridged over to prevent a short circuit of said external throat arranged there. --

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